

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 01210 020953Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 AID-05 TRSE-00  
ACDA-12 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
/099 W

-----086864 021444Z /46

R 020930Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSU DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7062  
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
USINT BAGHDAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1210

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ETRN PEPR SY IZ TU  
SUBJECT: SYRIA PERMITS RETURN OF TURKISH BOXCARS FROM IRAQ

1. TURKISH AMBASSADOR FENMAN TOLD US FEB 27 THAT SYRIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE AUTHORIZED THE TRANSIT OF SYRIA FROM IRAQ OF 1200 EMPTY TURKISH BOXCARS WHICH HAD BEEN BLOCKED AT THE SYRIAN BORDER FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS. FENMAN NOTED TURKISH DEMARCHES ON THIS SUBJECT HAD GONE UNANSWERED UNTIL HE WAS SUMMONED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY FEB 18 CONCERNING A REPORT TURKEY HAD CLOSED ITS BORDER WITH SYRIA. DEPFONMIN AL-KHANI TOLD HIM THAT IF REPORT WERE TRUE SYRIA WOULD "NOT UNDERSTAND" SINCE DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN SEVERAL DAYS EARLIER TO REPLY POSITIVELY TO TURKISH REQUEST TO BRING ITS EMPTY BOXCARS BACK FROM IRAQ. FENMAN SAID THAT HE WAS PLEASED TO HEAR OF LATTER DECISION AND ASKED RECORD SMZ RRT THIS MEETING WAS THE FIRST WORD HE MDR HAD ABOUT IT.

2. FENMAN THEN CHECKED WITH ANKARA AND WAS ADVISED THAT NO ORDER HAD BEEN GIVEN TO CLOSE THE BORDER DESPITE TURKISH IRRITATION WITH SYRIA'S INTERRUPTION OF RAIL TRAFFIC. ANKARA NOTED THAT BECAUSE OF SHIPPERS' INABILITY TO USE  
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RAIL LINE, THERE WAS A SENIOUS BOTTLENECK OF TRUCK TRAFFIC IN TURKEY DESTINED FOR IRAQ NEAR THE NORTHEASTERN SYRIAN BORDER. GOODS WERE BEING OFF-LOADED FROM TRAINS ONTO TRUCKS WHICH WOULD BY-PASS SYRIA. ANKARA SPECULATED THIS HAD PROMPTED RUMOR OF TURKISH BORDER CLOSING.

3. FENMAN COMMENTED THAT DAMASCUS AUTHORITIES HAD GIVEN

NO HINT THEY ARE CONSIDERING EARLY OPENING OF  
RAIL LINE TO IRAQ.  
MURPHY

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REPATRIATION, ROLLING STOCK  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978DAMASC01210  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780095-1029  
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**TAGS:** ETRN, PEPR, PBOR, SY, IZ, TU  
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**Review Markings:**  
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